STATE

Towns slow to organize against gay rights

By **Louis Aguilar**
Gazette Telegraph

Colorado for Family Values' call for communities to organize against against gay rights has elicited little activity so far.

No one in the towns where the group has given community watch seminars has formed a group to fight those who support gay rights, as they were urged to do.

But, say seminar organizers in those towns, the seeds have been sown. Three said they would use the group's detailed game plans — including monitoring groups and picketing businesses if necessary — if they faced a gay rights challenge.

"There is no insinuation that we have to get started on these kinds of things immediately," said the Rev. Bill Frashuer of Trinidad, who sponsored a seminar at his Faith Christian Fellowship Church in May.

Amendment 2 fans said they have seen no signs of organized gay communities in their areas.

"If you ask me, it's (the seminar) meant more as an informational kind of lecture," said Gary Coats, who invited the group to Grand Junction. "That outline, maybe it will come in handy at some point, but at this point I don't see the real need to do those things."

The organizers said the best thing about the seminars was hearing that their vote for Amendment 2 counted.

They expressed frustration with the negative publicity heaped upon Colorado since passage of the measure, which bans laws protecting gays from discrimination based on sexual orientation.

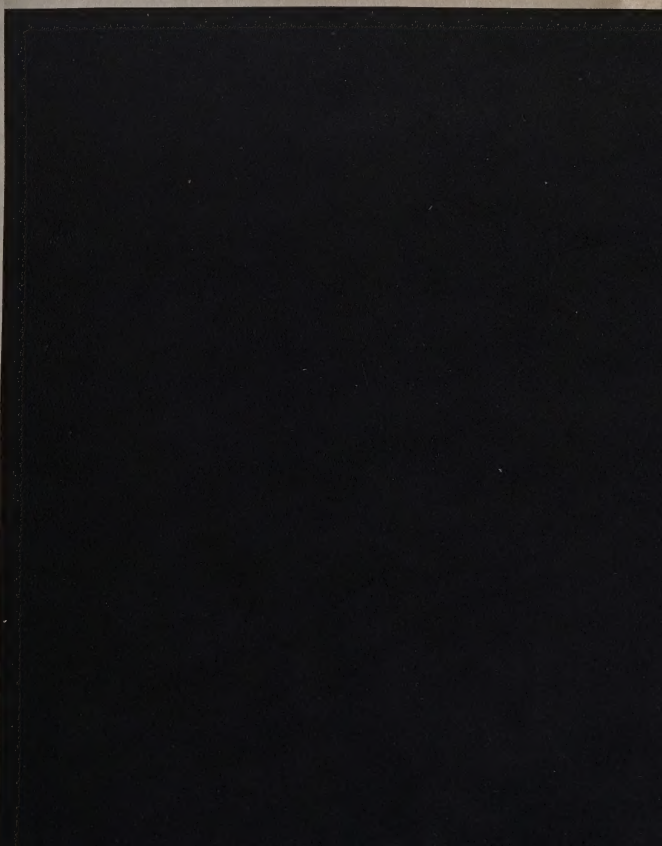
"The media and the gays just haven't been telling the truth about this, and it was very nice to finally hear it again," said the Rev. David Drew of the Steamboat Christ Center in Steamboat Springs.

Frashuer and other Amendment 2 supporters contended they — not homosexuals — were the victims in the gay rights debate. "We are not trying to condemn one person. It's very sad — it's not about discrimination. . . . This is about another group trying to get privileges."

If supporters were to try to organize their communities against gay rights, it's unclear how local leaders would react.

For example, the residents of Rio Grande County voted 2 to 1 for Amendment 2. But local officials were skeptical that the group would make any new headway there, even though the watch meeting in March was well attended.

"We see the divisiveness it has caused in the cities like yours (Colorado Springs) and Denver," said Monte Vista Mayor Mike Lister. "I don't think we need that kind of debate in a small community like this."



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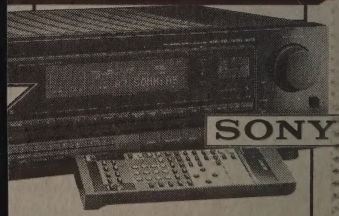

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